



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

September 2014 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Month	EBT Transactions	Debit/Credit Transactions	Total Transactions	EBT Sales	Debit/Credit Sales	Total Sales
January	58	395	453	\$1,399.49	\$14,822.50	\$16,221.99
February	28	348	376	\$1,007.88	\$12,511.22	\$13,519.10
March	29	570	599	\$1,226.89	\$17,365.99	\$18,592.88
April	63	991	1054	\$2,186.23	\$36,659.12	\$38,845.35
May	363	6218	6581	\$5,199.16	\$221,846.59	\$227,045.75
June	597	5881	6478	\$6,841.93	\$147,377.30	\$154,219.23
July	951	4831	5782	\$9,884.85	\$82,912.95	\$92,797.80
August	1211	5030	6241	\$14,615.26	\$91,383.53	\$105,998.79
Total for Year	3300	24,264	27,564	\$42,361.69	\$624,879.20	\$667,240.89

August 2014 Facts:

Total sales for August this year were lower than August 2013 (\$105,998.79 compared to \$108,813.11). The number of EBT transactions were also lower in 2014 than in 2013 (1,211 compared to 1,662). For August 2014, there were a total of 6,241 wireless transactions compared to 6,856 in 2013.

In August 2014, there were 189,258 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$43,531,226 in benefits were issued in August to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding August sales:

There were 112 farmers who were active in August and 96 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Country Market (261) Sioux City
- ❖ Hoffman Produce Farm (88) Waterloo
- ❖ Scavo's Market (65) Des Moines
- ❖ Farmer Ken's Produce (36) Long Grove
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (30) Bennett
- ❖ Rinehart's Family Farm (29) Boone
- ❖ Westrum Produce (28) Stratford
- ❖ Hensley's Farm (27) Winterset
- ❖ Allen's Grove Greenhouse (26) Donahue
- ❖ Shelly Farms (26) Goose Lake
- ❖ Palm Tree Pat (25) Davenport
- ❖ Stillwater Greenhouse (22) Orchard
- ❖ Story Book Orchard (22) Story City
- ❖ Litteaus Garden Produce (20) Waterloo
- ❖ Heartland Farms (17) Waterloo

- ❖ Penick's Sweet Corn (17) Carlisle
- ❖ Yoder's Natural Farm (17) Bloomfield

Congratulations go out to Country Market for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and the highest amount in EBT sales. Well done!

Visiting Farmers Markets

I had another opportunity to travel and visit some farmers markets on September 5 & 6. I headed up to Marshalltown to visit the Appleberry Farm and then headed over to visit the Toledo farmers market. On Saturday morning, I visited the Downtown Cedar Rapids market and finished up by making a stop at the Marshalltown Cartwright Pavilion market.

I really enjoy getting out and catching up with all of you. I have had the opportunity to visit some great markets this year!

Downtown Cedar Rapids market



Daryl & Melissa Doty
Doty Angus Cattle Co.



Kevin & Brenda Pfautsch
Tatonka Farm

Cartwright Pavilion - Marshalltown



Margaret Hala
Hala's Honey

Total Merchant Services Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ)

There are still a few of you that have not completed the Total Merchant Services Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ). You will continue to be charged \$19.95 a month until it is successfully completed. Please let Tracy know if you need another SAQ form sent to you.

Closing down machines for the winter

As the fall temperatures set in, it is time to begin the process of shutting down the wireless machines that will not be used over the winter months. An e-mail/letter has been sent out to all of the farmers in the Wireless EBT Project.

I need to hear from you by **Friday, October 24th** to what your intentions are for your wireless machine this winter. The information that I need from each of you is the date that you will be finished with your machine (make sure to batch/settle before) and the date that you will need your machine live for the 2015 market season. If you are planning to attend winter markets, year around markets or selling from your farm, please let me know this. The shutting down process is very labor intensive for DHS, as well as for TMS and TSYs, so I need to hear from you by October 24th even if you don't plan on shutting down until a later date. Please either call or e-mail me and let me know what your plans are for the winter months.

Upcoming Events

Des Moines Downtown Winter Season Markets – Des Moines is holding their indoor/outdoor markets at Capital Square on November 21 & 22 and December 12 & 13. The Friday lunch market will be from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and on Saturday the hours are 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Changes to your contact information?

It is very important that DHS has your current e-mail addresses and your correct phone numbers. Tracy sends out a lot of important information and if DHS does not have your current information you could be missing out on important information. Please make sure that if you change your e-mail address or you drop or pick up a new phone number that you share that information with Tracy.

Paper for your wireless machine

Just a reminder that DHS supplies the paper rolls for your wireless machines. It is imperative that you use thermal paper or it could ruin your machine. Please do not use any other type of paper in your wireless machine other than the paper that DHS supplies. If you are running low on paper, please give Tracy a call.

Reminders:

1. **Remember that you cannot ring up a sale for another vendor. You could lose your Food Stamp certification and be terminated from the Wireless Project.**
2. **Since you are paying for the commercial transaction fees, be sure to keep track of what you are paying so you can use those expenses as a tax deduction.**
3. **You cannot set a minimum purchase amount. If an EBT household wishes to purchase \$.50 in onions, you do need to process the transaction. Same for any debit or credit transaction.**
4. **Hot foods and hot drinks (cocoa, coffee, and tea) cannot be purchased with SNAP EBT benefits.**
5. **If your Nurit machine quits working, you need to call TMS Tech Support at 1-888-848-6825. This is the phone number on the side of your machine. If you can't get the problem solved, please give Tracy a call.**
6. **If your VeriFone machine quits working, you will need to call Jason Butts at 402-574-7086 or Chris Shanahan at 402-574-7016. If you can't get the problem solved, please give Tracy a call.**
7. **Call Tracy if you need any supplies such as paper rolls, power cords, or battery.**
8. **The second battery that we provide to you was purchased by DHS. If you ever need to return your wireless machine, be sure to keep one battery, carrying case and signs.**
9. **Charge your batteries before market. You should always have a charged battery, ready to go for market. If a battery is not holding a charge, contact Tracy for a replacement.**

Help Desk

We are here to help you!

When you have questions about:

- **Participating in the Wireless project or reimbursement questions? Call Tracy Penick at 515-281-4935.**
- **What you can sell to EBT customers, or being authorized to accept EBT? Call USDA/FNS at 877-823-4369.**
- **Food Assistance eligibility? Call Kari Lind at 515-281-7000.**
- **Supplies – call Tracy Penick at (515) 281-4935.**